

DRAFT MINUTES

TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MONTHLY MEETING

June 1st, 2015

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 3:00 PM on Monday, June 1st, 2015. Those members in attendance were Mr. Ward Bucher, Chair; Mrs. Marsha Kacher, Mr. Robert Amdur, Mr. Ron Mitchell, Dr. Dorothy Fenwick, Mr. Robert Mueller and Ms. Cynthia Schmidt. Representing the County was Mr. Jeremy Rothwell and Mr. Daniel Brandewie.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

- A. REVIEW MINUTES OF THE May 4th, 2015 MEETING - The minutes of the meeting on May 4th were reviewed. Ms. Marsha Kacher moved to approve the minutes, and the motion was seconded by Ms. Cindy Schmidt and unanimously carried.
- B. RFP FOR SURVEY OF HOUSES OF WORSHIP AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell gave a brief overview of the RFP that went out to the public in early May. He explained that he made the requested changes and edits as per HPC and the Chair, Mr. Ward Bucher. He noted that as of this morning, the County has received three formal bids: 1.) The Center for Historic Architecture and Design at the University of Delaware, (\$14,900 total/\$1,200 per building) 2.) Mr. Paul Touart, (\$12,000 total/\$800 per building), and 3.) Ms. Elizabeth Beckley, Principal at Preservation Works, LLC (\$9,000 total/\$650 per building). Mr. Rothwell explained that he spoke with the county attorney, Mr. Mike Pullen, and the TCHPC would be permitted to go into closed session to discuss the credentials and qualifications of the three selected bidders if it so choose to, but would be required to go back in open session to actually vote on the selected bid. Mr. Ward Bucher asked the other commissioners as to whether they wished to go into closed session to discuss the qualifications of the bidders. Discussion ensued, and the TCHPC decided by consensus that it was not necessary to go into closed session. Mr. Ward Bucher called for a straw poll as to the preferred first choice of each of the TCHPC commissioners. Mr. Ward Bucher noted that in his opinion, all three bidders meet the Department of the Interior qualifications, but that Mr. Paul Touart is probably best qualified to conduct the survey. However, Mr. Bucher went on to say that since all three bidders are qualified, that the lowest bidder, Ms. Beckley, should in his opinion be chosen. Mr. Ronald Mitchell explained that he had done work with Ms. Beckley in the past, and that she is more than qualified, and would be his choice. Ms. Dorothy Fenwick expressed concern about the quality of the bid submitted by Ms. Beckley, particularly that she did not include copies of her previous documentation work, as requested in the RFP. She stated that in light of this, Mr. Touart should be the eselcted bidder. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that he did not have time to get back with Ms. Beckley about getting copies of her previous documentation work, because she did not submit her bid until three hours prior to the current meeting. Ms. Marsha Kacher echoed Ms. Fenwick's concerns about the quality of Ms. Beckley's submitted bid, particularly that it was very informal and lacked the thoroughness of Mr. Tourart's bid.

Ms. Dorothy Fenwick recommended that we go back to Mr. Touart and Dr. Sheppard at the University of Delaware, and ask if they would submit a lower final bid. Mr. Ward Bucher noted that if we accepted either Mr. Touart's bid or the University of Delaware bid that the TCHPC would have to decide which structures in the three villages would not be surveyed as planned. Mr. Robert Amdur and Mr. Ronald Mitchell asked staff as to whether the TCHPC would be required to submit a separate RFP to allocate the \$4,500 in FY 2016? Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that having spoken with the County Manager's Office, and since funding for the project is spread across two fiscal years, that a separate contract may have to be drafted and signed. Mr. Daniel Brandewie noted that we may be able to put in a contingency clause in the contract to account for the two fiscal years. Mr. Robert Amdur made a motion that the lowest bidder, Ms. Elizabeth Beckley at Preservation Works, LLC, be selected to perform the village survey as set forth in the TCHPC RFP at a cost of \$9,000, as agreed to in her submitted bid. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ronald Mitchell, and approved by the TCHPC by a vote of 4 – 2 with 1 abstention. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that he will work with the County Manager's Office and the County Finance Office to draft a letter and contract to Ms. Beckley within the next week.

- C. UPDATE ON THE MILLER'S HOUSE (T-70) – Mr. Ward Bucher explained that the Miller's House was recently sold to Robert and Stewart Wilson. As per the agreement with Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), the new owners are required to make an application for the property's inclusion into the Talbot County Historic Overlay District within 90 days of the date of the sale. We will keep it on the agenda as a discussion item for next month's TCHPC meeting. Mr. Ward Bucher noted that staff may need to send a reminder to the new property owners as that 90 day window comes to a close, if they have not yet made formal application.
- D. CROOKED INTENTION (T-48) SITE VISIT – Mr. Ward Bucher explained that a contingent of the TCHPC recently conducted a formal site visit and inspection at Crooked Intention (T-48), owned by Ms. Deborah Kuba. Mr. Ward Bucher explained that a number of deferred maintenance issues were noted with the outbuildings, and that she had mistakenly painted the cedar shingles on the roof of the house. Mr. Ward Bucher explained that he still has to complete the formal site visit report for both Crooked Intention and The Anchorage. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell noted that he will draft a thank-you letter and the mail the site inspection reports to both Ms. Kuba and Mr. Kemp as soon as he receives them.
- E. ST. JOSEPH MISSION CHURCH (T-73) NOMINATION TO NATIONAL REGISTER – Mr. Robert Mueller explained that he met recently with Father Nash, and he relayed his concerns that the nomination of the church property onto either the National Register or the Talbot County Historic Overlay District would potentially encumber the property so as to inhibit future uses, in contradiction to the wishes of either the Wilmington Diocese or Papal authorities in Rome. However, Mr. Robert Mueller did relay that Father Nash would be willing to meet with representatives from the TCHPC at some time in the future to discuss the matter further. Mr. Ward Bucher and Mr. Jeremy Rothwell noted that there is nothing preventing a structure on the National Register of Historic Places from being demolished unless there is some other easement or zoning overlay. The National Register would instead allow the owner of a historic structure to apply for certain federal and state tax credits for the rehabilitation of said structure. Mr. Ward Bucher recommended that we table the idea of nominating the

church (and cemetery) onto either the National Register or the Talbot Historic Overlay District until after the survey work is completed in Cordova, Bruceville and Skipton.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. NEXT SITE VISIT - Mr. Robert Amdur noted that Rich Neck Manor near Claiborne is next on the list to be inspected. However, because Mr. Ward Bucher was unavailable the third week in June and since HPC training has been scheduled for the fourth week in June, it was decided to defer the next site visit until Monday July 13th.
- B. PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF HISTORIC DWELLING ON LANDS OF ARTHUR FOSTER, III – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell passed out a proposed plat and photographs, and explained that Mr. Arthur Foster, III has made application to consolidate two deed parcels and to demolish a potentially historic dwelling in the front setback of the subject property. He also noted that a preliminary site visit to the property revealed that the dwelling has been vacant for some time; many of its windows and doors being broken or missing. Mr. Rothwell requested guidance from the TCHPC as to whether and how the dwelling should be documented. A discussion ensued among members of the TCHPC as to the proper course of action. Mr. Ward Bucher recommended that the burden be placed upon the landowner to document the respective dwelling, and stated that there should be a set process for applicants to follow in the future for the proposed demolition of historic structures. Mr. Ron Mitchell made a motion that the applicant shall be required to document the dwelling to be demolished, using the standard MIHP form. A discussion ensued. An amendment was offered to the original motion allowing the applicant to not fill in the “Statement of Significance” on the MIHP form. A second amendment was offered stipulating that staff and HPC members would assist the applicant in preparing the documentation. The first motion was carried by a vote of 5 – 2, while the second vote was carried by a vote of 5 – 1 (with one abstention). The original motion was seconded by Dorothy Fenwick and carried unanimously by a vote of the TCHPC. Mr. Ron Mitchell made a second motion stipulating that in the case of future proposed demolitions of historic structures that the property owner be required to document the said structure(s) using the standard MIHP form. Ms. Marsha Kacher recommended that this motion be tabled until the July meeting of the TCHPC since the Commission will be discussing future goals and policies for the TCHPC.

OPEN FLOOR – Mr. Jeremy Rothwell explained that he recently received notice from Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) of the new Cultural Resources Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. He explained that among other things, the grant program allows local governments and eligible non-profits to identify and document historic resources and structures that are threatened by natural hazards (e.g. flood, storm surge, coastal erosion etc.). Grant requests can be awarded for up to \$35,000, and no local matching funds are required. Mr. Jeremy Rothwell stated that he spoke with the MHT contact, Ms. Jen Sparenberg, who agreed to come and speak at our July meeting to explain how the grant can be used.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be on Monday, July 6th 2015 at 3:00 pm in Conference Room One of the Talbot County Office Building at 215 Bay Street in Easton.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 3:15 pm.

